

Message Text

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TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 148121

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OAS, SHUM, PGEN

SUBJECT: VIII OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY: U.S. GOALS

REF: STATE 145949

SUMMARY. VIII GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF OAS WILL ASSEMBLE
IN WASHINGTON JUNE 21-30. PRINCIPAL U.S. OBJECTIVES AT
THIS SESSION WILL BE TO ACHIEVE CONSENSUS ON MECHANISM FOR
REOPENING QUESTION OF OAS REFORM, AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE
TO REDUCE U.S. QUOTA CONTRIBUTION FROM 66 TO 49, CLARIFI-
CATION OF STATUS OF INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
(IAHRC) UNDER THE SAN JOSE PACT, A CONSTRUCTIVE DEBATE ON
THREE REPORTS TO BE PRESENTED BY IAHRC WITH STRONG RESOLU-
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TIONS ENDORSING ITS WORK AND A NONCONFRONTATIONAL DISCUS-
SION OF ECONOMIC ISSUES. POSTS MAY USE FOLLOWING MATERIAL
IN DISCUSSION OF OAS-RELATED ISSUES WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS.
SUBSEQUENT CABLES WILL BE SENT TO SPECIFIC POSTS INSTRUCT-
ING THEM TO CONSULT WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS ON SPECIFIC
ISSUES. POSTS MAY TAKE INITIATIVE TO DISCUSS QUESTIONS
WHICH WILL FACE VIII GA AND SOLICIT VIEWS OF HOST GOVERN-

MENTS.

1. VIII OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY WILL MEET IN WASHINGTON JUNE 21-30. MEETING WILL BEGIN WITH TWO DAYS OF OFF-THE-RECORD DISCUSSION DEVOTED TO PANAMA-US RELATIONS, OAS INSTITUTIONAL REFORM, ECONOMIC QUESTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS/TERRORISM. FORMAL SESSIONS WILL NOT BEGIN UNTIL SATURDAY, JUNE 24 WHEN FIRST PLENARY SESSION TAKES PLACE AT WHICH FORMAL SPEECHES WILL BE MADE. FOUR DAYS OF COMMITTEE WORK WILL FOLLOW, WITH DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED TO FIRST PLENARY FOR VOTE. WE HOPE, OF COURSE, TO ACCOMPLISH AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE DURING "INFORMAL DIALOGUE" PORTION OF MEETING, ALTHOUGH SOME CONTENTIOUS ISSUES ARE SURE TO BE DEALT WITH IN DETAIL AT FORMAL SESSIONS. IN PARTICULAR, WE HOPE SPEECHMAKING WILL NOT INTRUDE UPON FREE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS IN "DIALOGUE" PORTION OF MEETING.

2. FOLLOWING ARE US VIEWS ON MAJOR AREAS OF CONCERN IN VIII GA: PANAMA-US RELATIONS. RATIFICATION CEREMONIES IN PANAMA WILL HAVE CONCLUDED JUST PRIOR TO GA. ACCORDINGLY, WE HOPE THAT CONSIDERATION OF PANAMA WILL BE BRIEF AND HARMONIOUS, SETTING POSITIVE TONE FOR REST OF GA. THERE IS OUTSIDE POSSIBILITY HOWEVER, THAT CONTROVERSY WILL ARISE OVER PANAMANIAN INITIATIVE TO INCLUDE IN OAS RESOLUTION ON PANAMA SPECIFIC LANGUAGE TO EFFECT THAT NOTHING IN TREATIES OR ATTACHED DOCUMENTS IN ANY WAY CONTRA-

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VENES PRECEPTS OF OAS CHARTER. THIS INITIATIVE COULD IGNITE LINGERING OPPOSITION TO DECONCINI AMENDMENT ON PART OF SOME DELEGATIONS (BRAZIL) AND LEAD TO DIVISIVE DEBATE. ANY INDICATION THAT HOST GOVERNMENTS PLAN TO RAISE ISSUE OF DECONCINI AMENDMENT AT VIII GA SHOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY.

3. OAS REFORM. SIX YEARS OF DEBATE AND NEGOTIATION ON OAS REFORM HAVE RESULTED IN A STALEMATE BETWEEN US AND LATIN-CARIBBEAN MEMBER STATES. NEW DRAFT CHARTER AND DRAFT CONVENTIONS ON "COLLECTIVE ECONOMIC SECURITY" AND "COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT" ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE TO US. FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM IS DIFFERING INTERESTS IN OAS--LATINS AND CARIBBEANS SEE FORUM AS MEANS TO REGULATE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ONE HEMISPHERIC SUPERPOWER AND THEMSELVES; FOR US, IT IS USEFUL INSTRUMENT FOR REGIONAL SECURITY AND STABILITY. LATIN-CARIBBEAN AGENDA IS PRIMARILY ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENTAL; MAJOR US CONCERNS ARE SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS. NEITHER SIDE HOWEVER, WANTS TO ABANDON OAS, WHICH IS PRINCIPAL INSTITUTIONAL EMBODIMENT OF INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. NEED, AS US SEES IT, IS FOR JOINT ANALYTICAL REAPPRAISAL OF GOALS AND PURPOSES OF INTER-AMERI-

CAN SYSTEM TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF MUTUAL INTEREST, ON BASIS
OF WHICH CONCLUSIONS CAN BE DRAWN ABOUT ORGANIZATIONAL

QUESTIONS.

4. ONE POSSIBLE APPROACH TO SUCH A RETHINKING OF OAS RE-
FORM WOULD BE ESTABLISHMENT OF HIGH-LEVEL NEGOTIATING
COMMISSION WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO RECONSIDER BASIC GOALS AND
PURPOSES OF INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM AND REPORT TO IX GA IN
LATE 1979. WE EXPECT MEXICO TO SUGGEST SUCH AN APPROACH
AND PLAN TO SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE, WORKING TO MAKE SURE
THAT THE MANDATE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE PROPOSED
COMMITTEE ARE ADEQUATE TO TASK. IN PARTICULAR, WE BELIEVE
THAT THE COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE SHOULD BE GOAL/
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FUNCTION ORIENTED, RATHER THAN OPENING TO FURTHER NIGGLING
OVER PHRASES IN NEW CHARTER AND DRAFT CONVENTIONS, WHICH
HAVE UNFORTUNATELY CHARACTERIZED THE REFORM PROCESS TO
DATE. US ALSO BELIEVES THAT MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE
SHOULD BE SMALL (FROM 5 TO 7 INDIVIDUALS) AND OF SUFFICIENT
DISTINCTION TO GIVE ITS DELIBERATIONS SOME WEIGHT. WE
RECOGNIZE NEED TO INVOLVE ALL GOVERNMENTS IN PROCESS AS
IT PROCEEDS, PERHAPS BY REGULAR REPORTS TO PC BY NEGOTIATING COMMISSION.

5. US QUOTA. US MUST WIN AGREEMENT AT VIII GA TO FORMULA
FOR REDUCTION OF ITS QUOTA ASSESSMENT FROM 66 TO 49 .
THIS INITIATIVE WILL BE UNPOPULAR AND WILL PROBABLY FACE
OPPOSITION FROM SOME MEMBER COUNTRIES, NOTABLY BRAZIL,
WHICH IS STRONGLY OPPOSED TO ANY STEP WHICH WOULD INCREASE
ITS OWN QUOTA ASSESSMENT. IF PROGRESS NOT SHOWN ON
QUOTA REDUCTION AT THIS GA HOWEVER, CONGRESS WILL PROBABLY
TAKE UNILATERAL ACTION TO REDUCE US QUOTA.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. HUMAN RIGHTS WILL BE A MAJOR
THEME OF VIII GA ALTHOUGH IT WILL NOT DOMINATE DISCUSSION
AS AT THE VII GA IN GRENADA. IT IS EVIDENT THERE IS SOLID
MAJORITY IN FAVOR OF ACTIVE OAS CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
(SEE STATE 145949) AND THIS WILL HOPEFULLY PREVENT EMO-
TIONAL CONFRONTATION. ONE POTENTIAL PROBLEM COULD BE AN
ANTI-NICARAGUA CRUSADE BY VENEZUELA WHICH, DEPENDING ON
HOW IT IS HANDLED, COULD PROVOKE LONG AND VIOLENT DEBATE
AND ADVERSELY AFFECT CONSIDERATION OF OTHER HUMAN
RIGHTS QUESTIONS ON AGENDA.

7. CLARIFICATION OF STATUS OF INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSION (IAHRC) UNDER SAN JOSE PACT. MOST URGENT HUMAN
RIGHTS QUESTION FACING VIII GA WILL BE CLARIFICATION OF
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LEGAL STATUS OF IAHRG WHEN AMERICAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (PACT OF SAN JOSE) COMES INTO EFFECT. PACT HAS NOW BEEN RATIFIED BY 8 STATES AND RATIFICATION BY THREE MORE, WHICH WILL BRING IT INTO EFFECT, IS EXPECTED SOON. TWO

CONTROVERSIAL PROPOSITIONS HAVE BEEN ADVANCED REGARDING EFFECT OF ENTRY INTO FORCE OF PACT ON IAHRG. ONE HOLDS THAT PACT WILL IMMEDIATELY TERMINATE MANDATE OF PRESENT IAHRG AND CREATE HIATUS IN AUTHORITY OF SECRETARIAT UNTIL OASGA ELECTS NEW COMMISSION. SECOND IS THAT ENTRY INTO FORCE WILL END AUTHORITY OF IAHRG OVER STATES WHICH HAVE NOT RATIFIED SAN JOSE PACT. IF EITHER VIEW PREVAILS, PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN HEMISPHERE WILL BE SERIOUSLY UNDERMINED. THIS PROBLEM ARISES FROM VAGUE AND SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTORY LANGUAGE WITH WHICH OAS CHARTER AND PACT OF SAN JOSE DEAL WITH IAHRG. WE WILL BE WORKING WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS, NOTABLY COSTA RICA, TO OBTAIN RESOLUTION WHICH WILL SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

8. IN ADDITION TO LEGAL QUESTION OF IAHRG STATUS, GA WILL HAVE BEFORE IT THREE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS: IAHRG ANNUAL REPORT AND TWO SPECIAL REPORTS--ON PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY. IAHRG ANNUAL REPORT ALSO CONTAINS SPECIAL SECTION ON CHILE, INSTEAD OF SEPARATE SPECIAL REPORT WHICH WAS PRESENTED TO TWO PREVIOUS GA'S. US DELEGATION WILL WORK FOR FULL DISCUSSION OF ALL THREE REPORTS AND SEPARATE RESOLUTIONS COMMENDING IAHRG FOR ITS WORK AND URGING GOVERNMENTS TO PUT ITS RECOMMENDATIONS INTO EFFECT. WE WILL ALSO JOIN OTHER MEMBER STATES IN SPONSORING RESOLUTIONS TO ENSURE THE CURRENT FUNDING AND OPERATIONAL AUTONOMY OF THE IAHRG IN ORDER TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS IN MEMBER COUNTRIES. WHILE WE OPPOSE ALL FORMS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE, WE WILL RESIST ANY EFFORT TO JUSTIFY VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS A LEGITIMATE RESPONSE TO TERRORISM.

9. ECONOMIC/DEVELOPMENT ISSUES. ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT
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ISSUES WILL BE A HIGH PRIORITY FOR THE LATIN AND CARIBBEAN PARTICIPANTS IN THE GA. WE CAN EXPECT STRONG CRITICISM OF US ACTIONS ON SUGAR AND TIN, CONCERN ABOUT PERCEIVED "RISING PROTECTIONISM" IN US, COMPLAINTS ABOUT EXCLUSION OF VENEZUELA AND ECUADOR FROM GSP BENEFITS, A DISCUSSION OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND CHARGES THAT US HAS LOST INTEREST IN HEMISPHERIC DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS. MANY OF

THESE ISSUES WERE RAISED AT THE APRIL SCCN MEETING IN
SANTO DOMINGO. OUR PRIMARY EFFORT WILL BE TO AVOID CON-
FRONTATION ON ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES WHILE TRY-
ING TO MOVE THE DISCUSSION OF THESE QUESTIONS INTO CON-
STRUCTIVE CHANNELS. VANCE

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